ORS Implementing Automated Clearing House Payment Method for Funding of Industrial Clinical Trial Agreements

As part of an ongoing effort to improve the accuracy and processing time for research funding from industrial clinical trial sponsors, ORS is making changes to the accounts receivable process. Penn has the means to accept payments via Automated Clearing House (ACH). ACH wires are secure, same day transfers of funds that are used in everything from major financial transactions to direct deposit of payroll. Much like individual payroll, Penn would have funds wired directly into the appropriate research accounts in place of a paper check being issued and mailed (often to an incorrect address).

The ACH project team has been meeting with Business Administrators and Clinical Coordinators across several departments to ensure that this new process will meet departmental needs. Sponsors such as Bristol-Myers Squibb, Pfizer and Schering Plough have actively approached Penn about moving to ACH payments.

Currently the ACH team is developing the framework for this new process with a target implementation date of January 1, 2003. Details of the new process will be communicated via future newsletters, e-mails (on ORS listserv) and meetings.

For any immediate questions or concerns please feel free to contact Greg Curley in Research Services gcurley@pobox.upenn.edu.

NIH Issues a Reminder about NRSA Training Grants

On October 9, 2002, NIH issued the following reminder. NRSA recipients receive a stipend a subsistence allowance to help defray living expenses during the research training experience. It is not provided as a condition of employment with either the Federal Government or the institution. Since NRSA awards are not provided as a condition of employment, it is inappropriate and unallowable for institutions to seek funds for or to charge individual fellowships and institutional training grant awards for costs that would normally be associated with employee benefits (for example FICA, workman’s compensation and unemployment insurance). NIH occasionally receives information that FICA and/or other unallowable costs have been inappropriately charged to NRSA stipends. This notice should serve as a reminder that such charges are unallowable at all times.

Please contact Kerry Peluso, Director of Post Award Financial Administration, at 3-6705 or pelusok@pobox.upenn.edu if you have any questions.
From the DHHS Inspector General’s FY 2003 Work Plan: Commitment of Principal Investigators’ Effort in Grant Applications

As part of DHHS (Department of Health and Human Service) FY 2003 work plan, they have announced that part of this review will focus on the commitment of PI’s time in grant applications. This review will determine whether major research universities committed more than 100 percent of principal investigators’ effort when applying for National Institutes of Health (NIH) training grants and, if so, whether the resulting grant awards were inflated. Recent work found that one major research university routinely overcommitted the principal investigator’s efforts on applications for federal training awards. The NIH funds grant proposals on a cost-reimbursable basis and considers the investigator’s role in deciding whether to fund the proposal. If a university promises more of the proposed investigator’s time than is available, the NIH funds intended to pay for salary could possibly be used for costs not included in the proposal and the research quality could be affected.

More NIH News

1. NIH Eliminates Pre-Printed Face Pages for Non-Competing Grant Progress Reports

As part of its effort to transition from paper-based to electronic transactions, NIH has eliminated its practice of providing pre-printed “face pages” for Non-competing Grant Progress Reports (Type 5 applications). Instead, grantee officials at each institution can run on demand a report that lists when progress reports are due. See NIH Guide Announcement NOT-OD-02-066 for more information http://grants1.nih.gov/grantsnoticeguide/-files/NOT-OD-02-066.html/

2. NIGMS Reminds Grantees to use correct address:

NIGMS has recently written to all NIGMS grantees because they have noted that many applications have been sent to obsolete addresses. The correct address for submitting non-competing (Type 5) applications to NIGMS is:

National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS)
Natcher Building
45 Center Drive, Room 2AN-28, MSC 6200
Bethesda, MD 20892-6200

NOTE: When using a courier service or express shipment service, use 20814 as the zip code instead of the one noted above.

If you would like to verify the current address for submitting progress reports to another Institute or Center see: http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/type5_mailing_addresses.htm/


A copy of this comprehensive guide can be found at http://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/grants_info.pdf

Upcoming Training Opportunities for Research Administrators

Proposal Processing at the University of Pennsylvania, Thursday, December 12, 10 a.m. For further information and to register, please go to http://www.finance.upenn.edu/ftd/.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS FACILITATED BY USE OF PENN STANDARD SPONSORED RESEARCH AGREEMENT

When entering into discussions with potential Sponsors of research agreements, Faculty and business administrators are urged to bring to the attention of the Sponsor the University’s standard Sponsored Research Agreement (SRA) as soon as possible. Doing so will facilitate the negotiation process.

The advantages can be significant in completing an agreement based on the Penn SRA. A quick survey of the Sponsored Research Agreements completed in FY 2002 revealed that when ORS started with the Penn SRA, the median completion time was 35 days. In contrast, when ORS had to negotiate an agreement based on a Sponsor’s template agreement, the median completion time increased to 72 days. Standard Sponsor templates are usually biased in favor of the Sponsor, and often need wording changes to comply with University of Pennsylvania policy. Since the Penn SRA contains terms and conditions acceptable to the University, agreements can be immediately signed if a Sponsor agrees to the Penn SRA without additional changes.

The Penn SRA is available in pdf, read-only format via the Office of Research Services website:

http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rs/forms.html

Whenever possible, potential Sponsors should be directed to this website early in the negotiation stages. Alternatively, request that ORS supply a potential Sponsor with a copy of the Penn SRA. In some cases, the Sponsor does not have a strong opinion regarding whose standard agreement must be used. A positive spin can be placed on this request by informing the Sponsor that by viewing the standard Penn SRA, the Sponsor’s negotiators will be aware of the terms and conditions which Penn seeks in sponsored research agreements.

Please contact Dr. Edward Pieters, Associate Director, Research Agreements with any questions at 215-573-6712 or at pieters@pobox.upenn.edu.

Changes to the Post Award Staff

Jason Molli has been with ORS for over 4 years. On October 25, he left his position as Financial Analyst. Penn will continue to benefit from Jason’s knowledge and skills as he assumes his new position as Accounting Manager in the Department of Genetics.

Bob Speakman who has been with ORS for over a year as a Receivables Accountant, will be assuming Jason’s position. Any requests or inquiries that were formerly forwarded to Jason, should be forwarded to Bob at bspeakman@pobox.upenn.edu or 215-898-2345.

Please note that we are now accepting applications for Bob’s former position of Receivables Accountant. Resumes should be forwarded to Kerry Peluso, Director of Post Award Administration, pelusok@pobox.upenn.edu.
Frequently Asked Questions...
What is “Expanded Authorities”?  

Federal regulations require prior approval from an awarding agency for a variety of project changes. Several years ago, the federal government’s Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reduced the number of required prior approvals in an effort to streamline the grants management process by issuing “expanded authorities”. However, some required prior approvals do remain. More detailed information is presented in Penn’s Sponsored Programs Manual which can be found at www.upenn.edu/researchservices/spmanual/index.html or in the OMB Circulars which can be found at www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index-education.html.

Many federal agencies have waived cost-related prior approvals and permit an institution to decide budget changes under their “expanded authorities.” These expanded authorities are automatically in force for most grants that support research, but they do not apply to contracts. In addition to the cost-related prior approval waiver, the following changes are permitted without prior agency approval:

- Pre-award costs up to 90 days prior to award (Please note that this does require ORS approval. Please contact your ORS Contract Administrator to receive further information.)
- One-time expiration date extension of up to 12 months (Please note that this does require ORS approval. Please contact your ORS Contract Administrator at least 30 days prior to your end date to receive more details on how to receive a no cost extension.)
- Carryover of unobligated balances to subsequent funding periods (Please contact your ORS Contract Administrator or Accountant for further information.)

Please note that while expanded authorities do apply to most federal grants, they do not apply to all and can vary somewhat by agency. Any terms included in the Notice of Award from the agency supercede any authority provided by these expanded authorities.

Certain other changes, however, still require prior approval of the awarding agency:

- Changes in project scope or objective
- Change of PI or other key personnel
- Absence of the PI for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in effort spent on the project by the PI
- Need for additional funds
- Other changes specifically cited in the award or in agency-specific guidelines

As a participant in the Federal Demonstration Project (FDP), the University receives the most favorable grant terms and conditions from FDP participating agencies. For further information, please see www.thefdp.org. For further information on the expanded authorities which have been issued to Penn under the Federal Demonstration Project (FDP), please see http://www.nsf.gov/home/grants/grants_fdp.htm.

For further guidance on changes to your project, please see http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/spmanual/changes.html or contact Pam Caudill, Director of Pre Award at caudill@pobox.upenn.edu or Kerry Peluso, Director of Post Award Financial Administration at pelusok@pobox.upenn.edu.

Where can I get more information about administering my grants?

Office of Research Services Web Site: www.upenn.edu/researchservices/  
Research Investigator’s Handbook: www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rih/intro.html  
A Quick Guide for Faculty: www.upenn.edu/researchservices/pdfs/newfacbk.pdf  
University of Pennsylvania Cost Sharing Policy: www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rs/costshare.html  
Contact an Office of Research Services Staff Member: www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rs/contact.html

No Cost Extensions on Federal Grants covered by Expanded Authorities must be requested from ORS at least 30 days prior to the original end date.

For timely news and updates, subscribe to our mailing list....  
http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/rs/subscribe.html
Office of Research Services

Pre-Award Administration Staff

The Pre-award staff is responsible for processing proposals, reviewing, negotiating, and accepting awards (except for corporate contracts), as well as, providing post-award non-financial administration for these accounts. Questions concerning issues such as no-cost extensions, carryover requests and other administrative matters should be directed to the appropriate pre-award contact.

Questions concerning industrial clinical trial agreements and sponsored research agreements should be addressed to the Corporate Contracts Group. Greg Curley is now responsible for Account Information Sheets (AIS’s) for all industrial clinical trials and sponsored research agreements.

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• Biomedical Graduate Studies – SOM
• Biostatistics – SOM
• Cancer Center – SOM
• Center for Experimental Therapeutics – SOM
• Institute for Environmental Medicine – SOM
• Institute for Human Gene Therapy – SOM
• Institute for Neurological Sciences – SOM
• Medical Genetics – SOM
• Neurology – SOM
• Pathology & Laboratory Medicine
• Rehabilitative Medicine – SOM

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• General University
• Institute of Contemporary Art
• Law School
• Morris Arboretum
• Provost Interdisciplinary Program
• School of Art and Sciences
• School of Social Work
• Student Services
• Van Pelt Library

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• Center for Aids Research – SOM
• Genetics – SOM
• Hematology/Oncology
• Orthopedic Surgery – SOM
• Pediatrics – SOM
• Physiology – SOM
• School of Medicine, Institute for Medicine & Engineering – SOM
• Radiation Oncology
• Radiology

SOPHIA WHITEHEAD – SR. CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR
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• Annenberg Center for Performing Arts
• Annenberg School for Communication
• Cell & Developmental Biology – SOM
• Center for Bioethics – SOM
• Dermatology
• Geriatrics – SOM
• Microbiology – SOM
• Ophthalmology – SOM
• Otorhinolaryngology – SOM
• School of Nursing
• School of Veterinary Medicine

CORPORATE CONTRACTS GROUP:

DR. DONALD DEYO, Esq. – SENIOR ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
(215) 573-9970 OR deyo@pobox.upenn.edu

DR. EDWARD PIETERS – ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
(215) 573-6712 or pieters@pobox.upenn.edu
• Sponsored Research Agreements

SHEILA ATKINS – SENIOR CONTRACTS ADMINISTRATOR
(215) 573-6713 or satkins@pobox.upenn.edu
• Corporate Clinical Trial Agreements

DENISE BOUYET – SENIOR CONTRACTS ADMINISTRATOR
(215) 746-6287 or bouyet@pobox.upenn.edu
• Corporate Clinical Trial Agreements

GREGORY CURLEY – CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR
(215) 746-0033 or gcurley@pobox.upenn.edu
• Account Information Sheets for Corporate Contracts
Post Award Administration Staff

The main functions handled by these ORS staff members are the preparation of financial invoices and reports, coordination of audits, collection of receivables, cash management functions, and close outs of funds. The Federal Compliance Group handles facilities and administrative costs, employee benefit rates, effort reporting, and compliance issues. Contact Information for all areas is provided below.

**FEDERAL COMPLIANCE GROUP:**

ROBERT McCANN – DIRECTOR  
(215) 598-1469 OR mccannr@pobox.upenn.edu

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FLOYD HARRIS – ACCOUNTANT  
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**POST AWARD ADMINISTRATION:**

KERRY PELUSO CPA - DIRECTOR  
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**FINANCIAL INVOICING AND REPORTING –Group 1:**

KIM GARRISON – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
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• School of Medicine Departments:  
  - Cancer Center  
  - Center for Sleep  
  - Muscle Institute  
  - Physiology  
  - Psychiatry  
  - Radiation Oncology  
  - Surgery  
  - Neurosurgery  
  - Institute of Contemporary Art  
  - Vice Provost of University Life

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• School of Nursing  
• School of Medicine Departments:  
  - Biochemistry/Biophysics  
  - Cell and Developmental Biology  
  - Center for Research on Reproduction and Women’s Health  
  - Microbiology  
  - Obstetrics and Gynecology  
  - Pathology  
  - Pediatrics – Neonatology  
  - Radiology

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• School of Medicine Departments:  
  - Biomedical Graduate Studies  
  - Dermatology  
  - Institute for Environmental Medicine  
  - Genetics  
  - Institute of Neurological Sciences  
  - Neurology  
  - Neuroscience  
  - Medical School  
  - Ophthalmology  
  - Orthopedic Surgery  
  - Otorhinolaryngology: Head and Neck Surgery  
  - Pediatrics Admin  
  - Pharmacology

FLORENCE GRAZIOLA – DESK ACCOUNTANT  
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• School of Medicine Departments:  
  - Department of Medicine

**FINANCIAL INVOICING AND REPORTING –Group 2:**

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• School of Dental Medicine  
• School of Medicine Departments:  
  - Center for Bioethics  
  - Center for Experimental Therapeutics  
  - Institute for Human Gene Therapy  
  - Institute for Aging  
  - Molecular & Cellular Engineering  
  - Center for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics  
  - Emergency Medicine  
  - Family Practice  
  - Anesthesia

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DERRICK BOWMAN – DESK ACCOUNTANT  
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• Annenberg School  
• Annenberg Center  
• School of Arts and Sciences:  
  - Chemistry  
  - Linguistics  
  - Physics  
  - Fine Arts  
  - Graduate School of Education  
  - Law School  
  - Morris Arboretum  
  - University Museum  
• School of Medicine Departments:  
  - Center for Bioinformatics  
  - Institute for Medicine & Engineering

CHARLES MOLLI – DESK ACCOUNTANT  
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• School of Arts & Sciences:  
  - All except Chemistry, Linguistics, and Physics  
  - The College  
  - General University  
  - School of Social Work  
  - Van Pelt Library  
  - Wharton School  
• School of Medicine Departments:  
  - Diabetes  
  - Rehabilitation Medicine

**RECEIVABLES:**

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BOB SPEAKMAN – FINANCIAL ANALYST  
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About Our Organization...

Our Mission

The Office of Research Services (ORS) was established in April 1998, through merger of the Office of Research Administration with the Research Accounting and Federal Compliance sections of the Office of the Comptroller. The Office of Research Services oversees the administrative support of the University’s externally funded research and is responsible for implementation of University policies established for this purpose. An important part of the ORS mission is to provide service to the research faculty, through the provision of information and advice for the development of applications, and assistance in the administration of awarded grants and contracts.

In this role, Research Services

• Supports the schools and centers in the development of proposals for grants and contracts
• Reviews and approves all proposals before submission to the potential sponsor
• Coordinates negotiations of awards
• Accepts awards for the University, including the signing of contracts
• Provides oversight and guidance to faculty and staff concerning the proper management of sponsored projects
• Prepares all financial reports to sponsors

In addition to these functions, Research Services is responsible for billing of contracts management of letters of credit for payment of grants, preparation of indirect cost and employee benefit rate proposals and rate negotiations, management of the effort reporting system, and oversight of service center rate development.

The office reports jointly to the Vice President for Finance and Vice Provost for Research.

Treasury Offset Program Notices

Please be aware that the Department of the Treasury has been offsetting funds due to the University and forwarding them to the Philadelphia VAMC. If you receive a notification that any funds which were due to the University have been offset, please fax a copy of the notice to the attention of Kerry Peluso at 215-898-0403.

Office of Research Services
Quick Contact List:

ORS General Phone Numbers:
215-898-7293 (General Information, Proposals, Awards)
215-898-7269 (Financial Reports & Invoices, Accounting)

Andrew B. Rudczynski, Ph.D., Associate Vice President for Finance
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